Northern areas particularly the backward Ladakh region which remains cut off from the rest of the area for over 7 months in a year.

(d) if so, the reasons therefor.

(e) whether the people of the Ladakh region had lodged strong protest to the Government in this regard; and

(f) if so, the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M IBRAHIM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Yes, Sir. The rates of increase in airfare is higher in Ladakh region as compared to the North-East region due to high cost of operations of flights to Leh. The revenue from these flights does not even meet the operating cost. Indian Airlines is, however, maintaining the fares from/to Leh at par with other sectors.

(e) and (f) Requests received in this behalf could not be acceded to due to the reason stated above.

[Translation]

Setting up of Taj Protected Area Development Authority

194. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government propose to set up Taj Protected Area Development Authority as suggested in 'Agra Heritage Project' formulated with the cooperation of United States of America for the overall development of Taj Protected Areas;

(b) if so, the time by which the decision is likely to be taken in the matter;

(c) the details of the other recommendations made for the development of tourism in Agra Heritage Project; and

(d) the details of the action plan for the implementation of these recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) and (b). A final decision to establish a single mechanism to coordinate the activities of the Agra Heritage sites can be taken after similar issues have also been considered in the proposed technical assistance Project on Environmental Improvement and Sustainable Development of Agra, Mathura and Firozabad Trapezium in Uttar Pradesh by the Asian Development Bank.

(c) The major recommendations of the Agra Heritage Project of the Govt. of India-National Parks Services USA are :

1. To ensure supply of uninterrupted power.
2. To improve Industrial operations.
3. To construct the Agra Bye-Pass Road and Ring Road.
4. To ensure use of Gas/LPG in Central Agra.
5. Construction of the Agra Barrage to improve the water supply position.
6. To ensure effective sewage treatment and solid waste management.

(d) The Government of India and Government of Uttar Pradesh have already started implementing some of the recommendations.

[English]

Availability of Pantry Cars in the Mail/Express Trains

195. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the names of mail/express trains passing through Bokaro Steel City, Dhanbad and Ranchi stations in which pantry cars have been provided;

(b) whether the Government have received any representation requesting for providing pantry cars in some important trains;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Pantry cars have been provided on following trains :

Bokaro Steel City and Ranchi

8101/8102 Hatia-Pathankot Exp.

Dhanbad

2381/2382 Poorva Exp.

2421/2422 BBs-NDLS Rajdhani.

3317/3318 Black Dimond Exp.

3029/3030 Coal Exp.

2307/2300 Jodhpur Express.

2301/2302 HWH-NDLS Rajdhani Exp.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d). Pantry car and mobile catering services on long distance trains are provided keeping in view the importance of the train, running time, stoppages, adequacy of catering services from static units enroute, the timings etc. subject to availability of pantry cars and maximum permissible load of the train. It has been decided to provide pantry cars by 8689/8690 Bokaro-Allepy Exp. 9305/9306 Indore-Howrah Shipra Exp.